

control." A protest meeting was addressed by Déroulède, and several artists withdrew their acceptance of the invitation to exhibit at Berlin. The German press resented the protests and criticisms of Paris. "The French have not the right," wrote the *Kölnische Zeitung** "to insult the august head of the German Empire and his noble mother. Every German who has the slightest sense of the dignity of his nation feels himself mortally outraged in the person of his Emperor." The Kaiser was furious at the protest meeting, the organizers of which were not punished, and the French Government learned that measures preliminary to general mobilization had been ordered. The danger was obvious, and the most careful precautions were taken to avoid an incident when she left the Gare du Nord. Not till long after did the French people learn of the peril thus narrowly averted.

On February 27, the day of her departure, Marschall von Bieberstein, the Foreign Minister, addressed Herbette in a tone which even Bismarck had never adopted. After emphasizing the good intentions of the Empress, and stating that Berlin had expected a courteous welcome and at any rate official protection against insults, he added: "Clearly one must not demand from a Republic what one would from a strong government." Even after making such allowances, he explained, there were limits to tolerance, and he hinted that they had been reached. The Ambassador, unaware that the Empress had already left Paris, telegraphed in alarm that the slightest manifestation of disrespect to her might involve war. ** "Nothing will be changed between the two Governments,"

remarked the Foreign Minister to the French Ambassador, ** but I cannot say the same of the two countries; for the sensible and peace-loving people who form the great

majority in France
let themselves be intimidated by a tiny minority
of adventurers.
That we shall not easily forget." Thus the visit
which was
designed to foster a *ditente* inflicted fresh
wounds and revealed
once again that the volcanic fires were ready to
burst forth at
any moment. There had been no real progress
between 1871
and 1891. A few days after the passport regime
was restored
in Alsace-Lorraine in full rigour. The countries
had reverted
to the relations of 1887, but on this occasion
there was no
Boulangier to hurl defiance across the Rhine.
France, more-
over, had an additional reason to avert or at any
rate to post-
pone a conflict; for the Russian alliance, long
advocated by
Boulangier, Deroulé and the Nationalists, was
in sight.